

Japan. — Review

# Missionary Life .

. . in Japan.

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## Missionary Life in Japan.

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*Dear Oberlin Friends :*

Now that one chapter of the missionary life of your missionary has closed, it is not unfitting that he recall, with you, some of the events which make up that chapter.

It was eight years ago the 10th of September—how short the years have seemed !—thas we sailed out of the Golden Gate toward the sunset. I must omit the nineteen days of—to me—purgatory and other interesting things between San Francisco and Yokohama ; also the seventeen days, packed full of things marvellous to our new eyes and ears between Yokohama and Kumamoto.

### LOCATION AT KUMAMOTO.

Kumamoto is the central city of western Kiyushu. It had just been made one of the stations of the American Board's mission in Japan, and we had been appointed one of the three families of the new station. The others were Rev. O. H. Gulick — Mrs. Clark's uncle and one of the oldest missionaries in Japan, Rev. and Mrs. Sidney L. Gulick, and Miss Martha Clark. Thus it was a sort of family station.

It was October 17, 1887, that we, in com-

pany with Rev. and Mrs. O. H. Gulick, reached our station. The others arrived later, about Christmas time.

This was before the reaction against the rage for things foreign, which had given Japan the choicest of the good things—and some of the worst—of other nations, had begun, and we were welcomed most cordially.

There was a little company of Kumiai (congregational) Christians in the city, a boys' school had been started a few months before under the auspices of these Christians, and a girls' school was begun a little later.

#### LANGUAGE STUDY AND TEACHING.

We understood that our main work for three or four years was to *learn the Japanese language*, and to this unpoetic and uninspiring work the best of our time and strength had to be given. But the schools were waiting our coming for English teaching, and took from ten to twenty hours a week of my time. I had also private classes, afternoon or evening as suited the convenience of the class, in English and Bible study, composed of students from other schools, policemen, soldiers, and others. Most of them came for English, to be sure, but yet they got something of the Bible and such other help in the knowledge of Christianity as we, in our semi-deaf-and-dumb condition, could give. We have seen some

of these seekers after English become true seekers after God and earnest Christians. But most of them have been lost sight of and only God knows how much of this indirect work will result in their salvation. I know that we have sometimes met with men whose first impulse Christward, culminating years after and far away in saving faith, was received in just such classes as ours at Kumamoto. The influence of the schools at that time was wholly and strongly Christian, and we were able to make our influence count there and in connection with the local church work.

We, beginners, did comparatively little of public speaking during those four years at Kumamoto, and what was done had to be done through interpreters. Only one or two addresses were given in Japanese by me.

#### KUMAMOTO HOUSE.

During our four years in Kumamoto we lived in a Japanese house with its thin paper walls and partitions and consequent abundance of fresh breeziness and winter coldness. Here every Sunday the children of the neighborhood were gathered in a Sunday-school, fifty or so of them. Here hours were spent with ordinary visitors. Here every New Year's time the house was filled from morning till night with callers. Here were held frequent school and church gatherings. Here we had our turn in entertain-

ing the weekly station supper and prayer and business meeting. Here were passed the long hours of struggle with the Japanese language. Here was our *home*, among the Japanese houses so very few of them really homes. We tried to do our full share of the station work. So did the others. And we all rejoiced together in seeing the signs of progress in getting the language and in the general work of the station.

#### DIVISION OF THE KUMAMOTO FIELD.

The field of the Kumamoto station included both east and west Kiyushu, a field far too large to be adequately cared for by the one touring missionary of the station. The east and west sides are separated by ranges of mountains hard to pass and only one or two short visits a year to the east side could be made from Kumamoto, so a division of the field seemed necessary. The people on the east side asked, with great unanimity and earnestness, from us personally and from the mission and from Boston direct that we come over to the east side and locate at Miyazaki. The mission hesitated because we would have to be alone on that side and 150 miles from any other foreigners. But Mrs. Clark's mother had just come to Japan and could be with us, and thus the loneliness would be relieved somewhat. It was decided that we give it a trial for one year. So

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when that year was up we were permanently located there.

#### REMOVAL TO MIYAZAKI.

The finding and fitting up a house in Miyazaki, the packing up and good-byes at Kumamoto, and the moving delayed our arrival in our new field until December. This was in 1891.

#### THE HIYUGA FIELD.

Hiyuga comprises a territory fifty miles wide and one hundred and fifty miles long, occupying the center of the east coast of Kiyushu. Miyazaki is its capital, and it was here we had our home.

Our welcome to Hiyuga was as cordial as our invitation to come had been, and our relations with our Hiyuga people have been only cordially friendly during our four years with them. The anti-foreign and anti-missionary sentiment, so uncomfortably shown in some other parts of Japan, we have felt very little in our East Kiyushu field.

The work of the province has been quite pioneer work. What little had previously been done was almost wholly Kumiai (congregational) work, and we had the province, with its 400,000 and more of people, almost wholly to ourselves. All the Kumiai Christians of the province had been organized into one church, known as the Hiyuga church, with a division of the church in three different towns, in two of which evangelists were

located. We had the pleasure of seeing these increase to six in the six most important cities, each with its increasing group of Christians and seekers, and one church building completed and another arranged for, to be built this spring. Other places have become ready for evangelists ; but the condition of the Board's treasury has forbidden further increase.

#### TOURING WORK.

I have made my main work during these four years in *Hiyuga touring work*. This touring work consists—

1. In visiting as often as possible the places where evangelists are located, helping them in meetings in their fields, advising with them in regard to their work, making calls with them, keeping sympathetically close to them in their personal lives, and in touch with their whole work.

2. In visiting the homes (with my good Japanese helper), holding public meetings and doing personal work in places where there is no evangelist and where the gospel message has not yet been heard ; and such places are still very many in our field. This touring work seems to me to be far the most important work of the missionary, and, to me, it is far the pleasantest work I have had to do.

#### THE BICYCLE A HELP.

I have found my bicycle a great help in



this touring, enabling me to do at least a third more than I could have done without it. For instance : One of my regular weekly trips for several months was : an after-dinner ride of 45 miles to Hososhima, reaching there in time for an evening of English teaching, followed by a Bible class and talk on Christian themes. Returning next day over the same route I had five classes of about two hours each, at as many different places, from three to ten miles apart, the first from 6 to 8 a. m., the last in the evening, after which I returned the remaining seven miles home. Such a trip was made possible only with the bicycle.

#### ENGLISH TEACHING.

I resisted as much as possible the demand for English teaching, but consented to do some of it, with the understanding that it should not interfere with the touring work. As a matter of fact, nearly every evening saw one or more classes gathered at our house for English, which I taught when I was at home, Mrs. Clark and Mother Gulick generally taking them when I was away. A part of this was in connection with a flourishing night school carried on there for about a year.

#### THE NEWSPAPER.

Ever since going to Hiyuga we have issued what we called a "Monthly News-Letter," giving items, local and general, of in-

terest to the Christians of Hiyuga, and with a view to awaken and maintain interest and mutual sympathy and sense of oneness among the Hiyuga Christians. It was a mimeograph issue of about 180 copies, in Japanese of course. A similar one was issued by the Kumamoto station on the west side. These proved so useful that about a year and a half ago the Kiyushu Bukwai (the Japanese Congregational Association of Kiyushu) asked that the two be united and printed as a Kiyushu paper. After consultation of the two stations it was decided to do this. Kumamoto was not in condition to look after it then, and the responsibility of editing and publishing the paper was put upon me. We made it usually an eight-page paper. This gave us another excellent evangelistic agency ; and with my good Japanese helper it was possible to do this in addition to our other work. We had carried it through one year when we came away. Mr. Gulick of Kumamoto also came with us and there seemed nothing to do but to drop the paper. But at the last Bukwai meeting the Japanese decided to take it up, and we are glad to see that it is being carried on in its old form.

#### THE MISSION HOUSE.

Our first year and a half in Hiyuga was spent in a very uncomfortable and inconvenient Japanese house—the best to be had at that time. But in Oct., 1894, our mission

house was completed. This house became not only a joy and convenience to the missionary family, fully appreciated after six years in Japanese houses, but one of the best means we had of spreading the Gospel message. It was partly foreign in style, the only one of its kind in the province; and with foreign furniture and foreign occupants, big and little, it became one of the things to be visited by people who came to Miyazaki. We tried to treat visitors in a Christian way, encouraged the coming, and at first had a few special days with special invitations. On no day were we without some such visitors, and on some days there were a good many scores of them, especially on holidays and at festival times. The route of the sight-seers through the house took them through the parlor, dining room, children's room, and kitchen (never upstairs except on very rare occasions) with due explanations of things seen. The organ and stoves and wire mattress called out more "oh's" and "ah's" than anything else. Our god-shelf was often asked for, i. e. the shelf, usual in Japanese houses, where the household idols and charms are kept. The route always ended with my study where a good supply of seats and tracts and missionary talk were kept; and each individual or crowd was given as much of Christianity as possible by talk and printed matter to take home with him. This was generally very gladly received, and re-

ceived by most of the visitors for the first time. We thought the interest would lessen as the newness wore off. But instead it increased and came to require nearly the whole time of one person, usually a trusty Japanese, to show the visitors around. Such visiting was not specially conducive to continuous work in the study nor to the privacy of home life. But it gave us an acquaintance and welcome and seed-sowing in every corner of the province near and far, and opened the way for visits to many new towns and homes. Probably more than 12000 people have thus visited us during the two years in our house.

#### A LOANING LIBRARY AND A READING ROOM.

A loaning library at our house, very much patronized, was another means of reaching the public. Also one of our rooms was fitted up for a reading-room, where the best of the Japanese papers, some games, etc., were kept, and which became a popular resort, for young men especially.

Our house was also the recognized and often used place for all sorts of social and religious gatherings of the Miyazaki Christians.

#### A KINDERGARTEN

was planned for at our house, material bought and teacher engaged, and kept waiting nearly a year for it. But redtape and dignified leisureliness of government officials

prevented its real beginning before we came away.

#### INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL FOR WOMEN.

A good start was made in the development of an industrial school for women. We took young women into our family and provided them suitable teaching in reading, writing, and other elementary branches, and in such work as weaving, sewing, knitting, silk raising, cooking, children's care, and the like. We asked of the women only that they provide themselves (when they were able to do so) with clothes and bedding, and we undertook to furnish them enough work to pay for their board (presumably). We hoped to turn these girls out fit to be good wives and mothers in Christian Japanese homes, or to send them on,—such as should prove to be suitable,—to higher special courses of study, like those of the Doshisha Training School for Nurses, or the Kobe School for Bible women, or the Kindergarten teachers' training school at Kobe. This was Mrs. Clark's special enterprise. Two of our girls were married to Christian young men before we came away, and two have since been the choice of two of our finest Miyazaki Christian young men. We had thus admitted ten or fifteen young women into our circle and had them nicely started when we were obliged to give up our much loved work and return to the home land.

## RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES NECESSARY.

Mrs. Clark's mother, Mrs. L. H. Gulick, whose whole life had been spent on foreign missionary ground, was with us at first in our Hiyuga field. Her presence and counsel in the home made our isolation less felt; and her experience and untiring zeal as a missionary made her indispensable in the general work. But after two and a half years with us God called her away to a better home and to a larger service. The care of her during the three weeks of her severe illness, coming very soon after the birth of our little girl, and the added burden of work and loneliness coming later, was a strain upon Mrs. Clark from which she was not able to recover herself. And last fall we were obliged to yield to the inevitable and return to this country for needed rest and recuperation for her. This was not a pleasant thing to do. Our work and our people had become very dear to us; and the expressions of regret on the part of our Hiyuga people showed us that this regret was not ours alone.

These eight years, especially the last four, have been very happy and increasingly busy years. This is especially true of the past four years. One factor in that happiness has been the assured sympathy and prayers of you whose missionaries it has been our privilege to be.

We reached Oakland, Cal., Nov. 13, and have remained till now on this west coast.

Mrs. Clark at first failed in health, but now seems really to be gaining; and we are hoping for such a recovery as will enable us to return after a reasonable vacation. This is our greatest desire and hope. God bless you all. Your missionary,

*C. A. Clark.*

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[For the present, Rev. J. H. Pettee, another American Board missionary, has charge of Mr. Clark's field. Mr. Pettee recently wrote to Mr. Clark that the situation in Miyazaki is most hopeful. The native evangelists whom they employ are earnest men, well trained, and the right men for their places. He adds: "One of my pleasantest occupations has been to learn how strong a hold you have on the workers and people at large. You may well take great satisfaction in what you have done here. It falls to the lot of few missionaries to stamp themselves indelibly upon a whole district in so short a time as you have taken. There are many warm inquiries for you and your family. You need fear no rival. Your place is assured forever in the heart of Hiyuga." The work is well directed during Mr. Clark's forced vacation in this country, and awaits expectantly his return to Japan. Mrs. Clark has gained her health somewhat, and will be in Oberlin with her husband during commencement. Their many friends will give them a glad welcome.—ED.]

